

I support media diversity

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules.

We strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. In fact we believe that the FCC, rather than allow further consolidation within media ownership, should restrict even further the number of print and broadcast media outlets any one corporation or person can own or control. A further loosening, or deregulation as you call it, will only further restrict the public's ability to hear and receive unbiased news in whatever market they are residing. The FCC was created to serve the public interest by limiting the market power of huge companies and corporations and their ability to influence our opinions without contrary or contrasting opinion. By allowing these rule changes to become law without public scrutiny is nothing short of criminal on the part of the FCC.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had, nor will have, on media diversity. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become much more limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. The people who founded this country believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

As stated above the public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

In addition to the official hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA, I strongly urge the FCC to hold additional hearings elsewhere around the nation to solicit the widest possible participation from the public which will be the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. I think it is important for the FCC to realize that consideration of only those points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue is against the general principles that the airwaves belong to the citizens. Those with a social or civic interest are poorly served as it is without further restricting access to information on which to base informed decisions.

It is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process. The serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy is of primary consideration not the accumulation of profit for a few corporations.

Thank you,

Jack & Fay Bussell
180 High St #34
Portland, ME 04101

